

N E W S R E L E A S E

Contact: Suzanne Schroeder
(916) 654-9029

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STATE OFFERS \$20 MILLION FOR JOB TRAINING PROGRAMS

SACRAMENTO – The state Employment Development Department (EDD), in coordination with the California Workforce Investment Board, and on behalf of the California Labor and Workforce Development Agency, today announced a solicitation for proposals with \$20 million available in job training grants.

Eligible applicants must be prepared to use the funds in innovative ways that focus on one of four workforce-training priorities:

- Growth industries that stress high wage, high skill jobs that will help California businesses succeed and expand and help workers get good jobs with good wages;
- Nurse education to add more classrooms and increase the number of nursing students to address the well-documented statewide shortage;
- Helping workers with barriers to employment, such as people with disabilities, youth, welfare recipients and people lacking workplace literacy skills; and
- Veterans employment programs to assist veterans who have significant barriers to obtaining meaningful employment.

“These funds will help organizations throughout the state equip workers with the skills needed to fill the many jobs being created as California's robust economy returns,” said Victoria Bradshaw, Secretary of the state Labor and Workforce Development Agency. “These grants will also target industries with worker shortages, specifically healthcare, where we have already dedicated over \$90 million toward alleviating the nurse shortage.”

The Director of EDD agrees these grant monies are an important investment in the state's future. “The goal of this solicitation is to select, through a competitive process, those projects deemed most likely to prepare workers for job opportunities in high growth, high demand and economically vital sectors of California's economy”, said Patrick Henning.

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It is expected that approximately 40 percent (\$8 million) will be targeted to the healthcare industry and for educating the number of nurses needed statewide. About \$7 million is expected to be available for veterans programs. The remaining funds, approximately \$5 million, will be awarded to proposals in the other two priority groups of growth industries and helping workers with barriers to employment.

Proposals will be accepted from public, private non-profit and private for-profit organizations. All applications must clearly describe their ability to conduct and administer a federally funded project. In addition, the timeline on all grants awarded will be between 18 and 24 months.

Information about specific proposals and/or a bidders package are available in electronic form at www.edd.ca.gov/wiarep/wiaspind.htm.

Bidders may submit questions, and receive answers on an electronic question and answer process. Questions must be submitted by e-mail to WIASFP@edd.ca.gov. August 31, 2005 is the last day to submit questions; EDD will post responses no later than September 7, 2005.

Proposals are due by September 26, 2005 by 3:00 p.m. PDT. Award announcements are expected to be made by mid-November.

Funding for these proposals is drawn from the federal Workforce Investment Act, Governor's discretionary, and is under the administrative authority of EDD.

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